

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN DIEGO REGION**

9771 CLAIREMONT MESA BOULEVARD, SUITE A  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92124-1331  
TELEPHONE: (619) 467-2952  
FAX: (619) 571-6972



June 13, 1996

Chuck Pryatel, Manager  
Site Assessment and Mitigation Division  
Department of Environmental Health  
County of San Diego  
1255 Imperial Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Chuck,

**RE: INFORMATION ON THE NEW MAPS DEPICTING RWQCB HYDROLOGIC  
BASINS AND SENSITIVE AQUIFER AREAS**

The purpose of this letter is to summarize the nature and availability of the new maps, to describe "sensitive aquifer" areas and several exceptions, and to forward map reference sheets for public distribution.

**NATURE AND AVAILABILITY**

There are two maps available for public view at this office. Both are multi-colored, one-dimensional, GIS-based maps of RWQCB Region 9. They are 52" x 60" and display a 1"= 1.58 miles scale. The major datasets included are hydrologic boundary lines, highways and roads, surface water features, USGS 7 1/2 minute quad map boundary lines, groundwater basins (or "sensitive aquifers") and county lines. The difference between the two is that one map has a single County Water Authority (CWA) Boundary line and the other has all San Diego County water district boundaries labeled. (NOTE: MCB Camp Pendleton lies within the CWA footprint since it is an affiliate member, however Camp Pendleton is 100% reliant on groundwater and will not be considered a "low risk" area. Sites will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.) *These exact maps are available for purchase from Teale Data Center in Sacramento for \$70.* The contact is Roger Ewers, GIS Analyst at (916) 263-1488. Should one desire changes in size, data type, color, etc. Teale Data Center will accommodate customized needs at \$80/hour for GIS programming.

**SENSITIVE AQUIFER DETAILS**

The maps depict yellow highlighted areas called Groundwater Basins by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) from a report first published in 1971 (revised in 1980).<sup>1</sup> *These*

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<sup>1</sup> "California's Ground Water," Bulletin 118, DWR, 1975 and "Ground Water Basins in California: A Report to the Legislature in Response to Water Code Section 12924," Bulletin 118-80, DWR, January, 1980.

*bulletins are available from the Department of Water Resources for \$1.00 each by calling (818) 543-4600 ext. 232. These highlighted areas are described as "sensitive aquifers" per the Interim Guidance on Required Cleanup at Low-Risk Fuel Contaminated Sites (April 1, 1996). DWR delineated the numerous groundwater basins throughout California for the purpose of clarifying where significant water production basins were located within various county and municipal geopolitical boundaries. The RWQCB understands that the DWR ground water basins are substantially\* the same basins recognized locally and found that the data was available in digitized format. It is the RWQCB's intent to preserve the quality of groundwaters throughout the region and especially in probable production basins.*

\* (There is one locally-studied basin not identified in DWR's database. It is known as the San Diego Formation<sup>2</sup> and appears to underlie Imperial Valley, Chula Vista, Coronado, National City and Downtown San Diego from the Elsinore Fault on the east, to San Diego Bay on the west. A thick homogeneous formation, it is understood that the primary production interval is deep (approx. 700-800 feet). The RWQCB is moving forward with implementing the Interim Guidance since it appears that groundwater drawn from such depths would be outside the influence of petroleum impacted sites. Although not on the above-referenced maps, RWQCB recognizes the San Diego Formation and supports its continued study.)

#### GUIDANCE EXCEPTIONS

The "sensitive aquifer" areas highlighted in yellow are distinct and separate from areas not designated for protection as a municipal (or drinking water) beneficial use in the 1994 San Diego RWQCB Basin Plan with three exceptions. One exception is that nearly all coastal areas west of Interstate 5 are not designated as "drinking water" basins yet DWR depicts groundwater basins there. PLEASE NOTE: THESE COASTAL SENSITIVE AQUIFER AREAS, WHEN LOCATED IN NON-MUNICIPAL BENEFICIAL USE AREAS, ARE NOT CONSIDERED SENSITIVE AQUIFER AREAS WITHIN THE INTERIM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK. The two other exceptions to the distinction between "sensitive aquifer" areas and municipal beneficial use areas are anomalies and may be studied for future Basin Plan amendments. One groundwater basin is in the San Marcos area (904.52) and one is in the Batiquitos Lagoon area (904.51). THESE INLAND SENSITIVE AQUIFER AREAS, IN SPITE OF THEIR LOCATION IN NON-MUNICIPAL BENEFICIAL USE AREAS, ARE CONSIDERED SENSITIVE AQUIFER AREAS WITHIN THE INTERIM GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK. It is RWQCB intent to continue to refine these maps in the future.

#### INFORMATION SHEETS

Attachment 1 was developed as a quick reference for determining whether a site, located in a specific hydrologic subarea with a municipal beneficial use designation, might or might not involve a "sensitive aquifer." If the hydrologic basin is listed, it means that no known "sensitive aquifer" exists anywhere within the municipal beneficial use area of that hydrologic subarea. (NOTE: This reference only covers hydrologic basin subareas within the CWA footprint.) Attachment 2 is a cross-reference for determining CWA groundwater basin names based on the map numbers and basin names given by the DWR.

If you or your staff have any questions or comments, please call Karen Zachary of my staff at

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<sup>2</sup> "Groundwater Studies of the San Diego Formation," Sweetwater Authority and Boyle Engineering Corporation, February, 1994.

467-2345.

Sincerely,

JOHN P. ANDERSON, Senior Engineering Geologist  
Site Mitigation and Cleanup Unit

Attachments

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